

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 8648

FOL ATHENS TEL 8648 SENT CINCUSNAVEUR (DTG 071626Z NOV 75)
RPTD TO STATE

QUOTE

PERSONAL FOR ADMIRAL BAGLEY FROM AMBASSADOR KUBISCH

EO. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MARR, GR, US

SUBJECT: ELEFSIS PIER

REF: CINCUSNAVEUR 311514Z OCT 75

1. MANY THANKS FOR REFTEL AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AN INPUT ON THE UPCOMING DECISION AS TO WHETHER TO TERMINATE OR CONTINUE THE EXISTING LEASE FOR THE ELEFSIS PIER FOR ANOTHER YEAR. ALTHOUGH I AM OF COURSE NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSESS ALL OF THE FACTORS WEIGHING ON SUCH A DECISION I DO HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE ELEFSIS FACILITY IS IMPORTANT TO US IN MAINTAINING OUR NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. SINCE, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE COST TO US IN TERMINATING THE LEASE IN JANUARY 1976 WOULD BE NINE HUNDERED AND SIXTY-SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS AND THE COMPARABLE COST IN JANUARY 1977 WOULD BE ONE MILLION, SIXTY-SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS -- ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS MORE -- I BELIEVE WE SHOULD RETAIN THE FACILITY FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

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2. I SEE NO POSSIBILITY OF OUR USING THE ELEFSIS

FACILITY DURING THE EARLY MONTHS OF 1976. IN A SENSE, THE GREEK GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE MATTER HAS EVOLVED AND CHANGED SOMEWHAT OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS. WHEN THEY WERE INSISTING THAT THE ELEFSIS FACILITY BE COMPLETELY CLOSED DOWN, OUR LAST PROPOSAL TO THEM WAS THAT THEY ALLOW US TO CONTINUE TO USE THE PIER FOR SOME ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF MONTHS AND DEFER THE FINAL DECISION AS TO THE LONG-TERM DISPOSITION OF THE PIER. THEY ACCEPTED OUR PROPOSAL IN PART AND AGREED TO LET OUR VESSELS USE THE PIER IN OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER OF THIS YEAR.

SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE STATED PUBLICLY THAT SUCH VISITS WOULD NOT BE AUTHORIZED BEYOND DECEMBER 31, 1975.

3. IN MY PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH TOP GOG OFFICIALS I HAVE PROTESTED THIS DECISION AND ACTION. I HAVE TOLD THEM THAT IN ADDITION TO THE IMPORTANT AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL SECURITY TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS AND THE EXTRAORDINARY GESTURE OF ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT TO GREECE WHICH OUR PRESIDENT HAS RECENTLY PROPOSED TO THE CONGRESS, WE HAVE A MAJOR INVESTMENT IN THE ELEFSIS FACILITY THAT WAS MADE IN GOOD FAITH AND BASED ON MUTUALLY AGREEABLE UNDERTAKINGS WITH GREECE. I HAVE SAID THAT IN THE LIGHT OF THE GOG'S OWN PREEMPTIVE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING OUR USE OF THE ELEFSIS FACILITY, I WAS PREPARED TO RECOMMEND TO MY GOVERNMENT THAT WE NOT OFFICIALLY REQUEST APPROVAL FOR USN SHIPS TO USE THE ELEFSIS PIER DURING THE FIRST THREE OR FOUR MONTHS OF 1976. HOWEVER, I HAVE SAID, I BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE OF THIS FACILITY SHOULD BE THE SUBJECT OF JOINT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN US AND THAT IN MY OPINION THE ENTIRE QUESTION SHOULD BE REVIEWED NEXT MARCH OR APRIL IN THE LIGHT OF CIRCUMSTANCES EXISTING AT THAT TIME.

4. THAT IS THE POSITION THAT I HAVE TAKEN HERE, AND WHILE IT HAS NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY TOP GREEK OFFICIALS, NEITHER HAS IT BEEN REJECTED. I DO NOT WISH TO LET THEM OFF EASY ON THIS AND IF WE CANNOT SOMEHOW FIND A WAY
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TO CONTINUE TO HAVE THE ELEFSIS FACILITY AVAILABLE TO OUR NAVY THEN I WANT TO GET AS MUCH MILEAGE AS POSSIBLE OUT OF THE CONCESSION TO BENEFIT OTHER U.S. INTERESTS -- MILITARY AND OTHERWISE -- IN THIS COUNTRY. I PERSONALLY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT PROSPECT FOR A FAVORABLE EVOLUTION ON FACTORS BEARING ON OUR FUTURE USE OF THE ELEFSIS FACILITY TO WARRANT THE ADDITIONAL ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND

DOLLARS THAT SELECTING THE OPTION WOULD ENTAIL.
AND, IF BY ANY CHANCE EVENTS DO NOT UNFOLD AS
WE WOULD LIKE, IN MY VIEW WE WILL STILL BE ABLE TO
OBTAIN FAR MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS
WORTH OF BENEFITS OUT OF SACRIFICING THE ELEFSIS
FACILITY SOME TIME DURING CY/76.

5. I HOPE THESE COMMENTS PROVE HELPFUL IN MAKING
THE FINAL DECISION AND WILL BE GLAD TO SUPPLY
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR VIEWS IF REQUIRED. PLEASE
FEEL FREE TO REFER TO THIS EXPRESSION OF MY VIEWS AS
YOU DEEM DESIRABLE IN FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE
MATTER WITHIN THE USG.

6. BEST REGARDS. KUBISCH UNQUOTE
KUBISCH

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